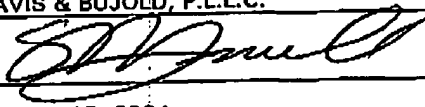
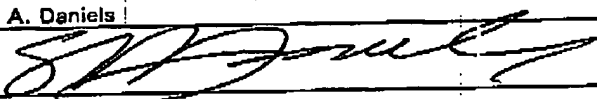


PTO/SB/21 (12-97)

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TRANSMITTAL FORM <i>(to be used for all correspondence after initial filing)</i>	Application Number	10/733,786
	Filing Date	December 11, 2003
	First Named Inventor	Kenneth MADDEN
	Group Art Unit	3679
	Examiner Name	Aaron M. DUNWOODY Fax: (703) 872-9306
Total No. of Pages in this Submission: 3	Attorney Docket Number	GEMVAL P18AUS
ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)		
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10/15/04

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of : Kenneth MADDEN
Serial no. : 10/733,786
Filed : December 11, 2003
For : COUPLING APPARATUS
Group Art Unit : 3679
Examiner : Aaron M. Dunwoody
Docket : GEMVAL P18AUS

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The Commissioner for Patents
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RESPONSE

Dear Sir:

This response is being filed in reply to the office action mailed September 22, 2004. In that action, the Examiner has required restriction under 35 U.S.C. 121 between the following groups of claims:

- I. Claims 1-11;
- II. Claim 12

In requiring restriction, the Examiner characterizes the inventions of Groups I and II to be related as "process of making and product made". The Examiner then alleges that "... the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process which does not provide a pipe with an insertion element." In making this statement, the Examiner appears to have ignored the stated limitations in the Group I, claim 1 and Group II, claim 12 which both cover "an insertion element having a radially extending projection for engaging in the annular groove". Furthermore, claim 6, also in Group I, includes substantially the same "insertion element" subject matter specifically recited as "... a male portion comprising an outer surface supporting a first projection and a second projection extending substantially perpendicularly from the outer surface". Thus, in the case of each independent claim in each Group I and II, a pipe with an insertion element must be provided.

In addition, other corresponding claim elements between the claims of Group I and II abound. Claims 1 and 12 both recite "a receiving element defining an axial bore having an annular groove". Similarly, claim 6 recites the directly corresponding feature of a "female portion having an axial bore defined by an inner wall about the main axis, and an annular groove formed in the inner wall". The "retaining ring" as recited in each of claims 1, 6 and 12

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